Our Cold-Blooded Friends
Bay Area Bats
Our Cold-Blooded Friends
Patient Highlights
Dear Wildlife Supporters,

When you think of the types of patients we care for, birds and squirrels probably come to mind, but bats might not. So why is a bat on the cover of Tracks? Well, we here at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley thought it would be a great idea to profile an animal that probably wouldn’t win a popularity contest, because we think that bats are fascinating, misunderstood, and a valuable part of the ecosystem. Despite their somewhat questionable reputation, they are known for playing an important role in the world around us. They eat pesky insects that “bug” us and destroy plants. They are also pollinators just like bees! At WCSV we have seen many different species of these captivating mammals, from the more common Mexican Free-tailed, to the lesser-seen Townsend’s Big-eared bats.

It’s because of you, our donors, that we can give superior care to the over 7,000 sick, injured, and orphaned mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians we see every year. From the smallest bird to the largest mammal, we do everything we can to give wildlife a second chance at living free once again. There are many ways you can help us help the animals. Please see the list below for ideas.

**Monthly Giving Schedule:** Set up a monthly giving schedule through Paypal. Once you set it up, you don’t have to think about it again, and the Center will benefit from your donations.

**Employer Matching Program:** This is a fantastic way to see your gift doubled. Ask if your employer has a matching gift program and see the back cover of Tracks for more information.

**Bequests or Living Trust:** A bequest or a gift through a living trust is another great way to contribute to WCSV.

**Amazon Smile:** You can donate to the Center when you shop on amazon.com. The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the sale price from your eligible purchases to WCSV. To register, go to smile.amazon.com, and select us as the benefiting charity. Every little bit helps.

**Amazon Wish List:** If you wish to buy a specific item that we need, try our wish list. To find it, go to WCSV.org/wishlist and you will be automatically redirected to Amazon.

**Cheewy Wish List:** If you wish to buy a specific item that we need, try our wish list. To find it, go to WCSV.org/cheewy and you will be automatically redirected to Chewy.

**Vehicle Donations:** Consider donating that old vehicle to CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services) as a way to help our local wildlife. Their programs turn any car, truck, boat, or RV into cash and deliver a high percent of net proceeds to nonprofits like WCSV. Visit their website to learn more about how to donate a vehicle to help WCSV at: careasy.org

**Sports Basement:** Support WCSV by becoming a Sports Basement Basementeer and receive great discounts at the same time! For a one-time fee of $25 you get 10% off every item every day and WCSV gets 10% of the profits. You can join the Basementeer program online at WCSV.org/basement or at your next visit to Sports Basement. Register and select WCSV as your beneficiary.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of WCSV and our mission to rehabilitate and release local wildlife. Every donation is meaningful and none too small.

To this small organization, you are a big deal!

With gratitude,

Laura Hawkins, Executive Director

---

The Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley is dedicated to providing sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife with exceptional free care, rehabilitation, and the opportunity for release. We also aim to educate the public about coexisting peacefully with local wildlife.

If you see an animal in distress, find helpful information at:

(408) 929-9453
info@wcsv.org
wcsv.org
3027 Penitencia Creek Road
San Jose, CA 95132

You can also find us on:

wcsv.org/facebook
wcsv.org/twitter
wcsv.org/instagram
wcsv.org/linkedin

---

**BOARDS OF DIRECTORS**

- **President:** Lisa Van Buskirk
- **Secretary:** Mary Sjostrom
- **Treasurer:** Larry Stites
- **Members:** Patience Davidson-Lutz, Katie Dinneen, Aaron Frank, Anthony Tansimore, Ken White

**STAFF**

- **Executive Director:** Laura Hawkins
- **Development Manager:** Holly Cormier
- **Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator:** Michael Chen
- **Administration Assistant:** Emanuel Henriquez
- **Development Assistant:** Sarah Demirhan
- **Veterinarian:** Dr. Jacqueline Hansted, DVM
- **Hospital Manager:** Ashley Kinney
- **Wildlife Manager:** Ashley Kinney
- **Wildlife Technicians:** Evan Tobin, Karin Clements, Lavanya Kothandaraman, Ruth Spence, Tiffany Luu

---

**TRACKS**

- **Managing Editor:** Michael Chen
- **Layout and Design:** Renae Killen, Ruth McDunn
- **Cover Photo:** Ashley Kinney

Tracks is a biannual publication of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley.
DEVELOPMENT CORNER

A message from our Development Team, Holly Cormier, Development Manager, and Sarah Demirhan, Development Assistant.

FLOAT T-Shirt

Support WCSV by grabbing up one or more of these limited edition WCSV t-shirts on FLOAT.org (For Love of All Things) from October 3 to October 10. By purchasing one of these tees designed by one of our amazing employees, you help us help the animals! Styles and colors may vary from the mock-up shown below.

Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley
- Est. 1993 -

A Special THANK YOU to our Invaluable Partners in Service

- Greg Abramson
- Bay Bee Honey
- Bay Raptor Rescue
- Coco Bonneville
- Frank & Lisa Bourgault
- California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Davidson Family Foundation
- Anton Espira
- Facebook
- Farrington Historical Foundation
- For Love of All Things (FLOAT)
- Kenneth Gilbeau
- Glide Foundation
- Leslie Grant & Walt Walraven
- Heather Hohlowski
- John & Valerie Hopkins
- Indoor Atmosphere
- International Bird Rescue
- Los Gatos Birdwatcher
- Ruth McDunn
- Metaphysical Arts Foundation/Bradley Greene
- City of Milpitas
- Mission City Community Fund
- Native Songbird Care & Conservation
- New Rez LLC
- New Seasons
- Peninsula Humane Society
- Pleasure Point Electric
- Michael & Emma Rock
- San Jose Animal Care and Services
- San Jose Water Company
- Santa Clara County Animal Care and Control
- Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation
- Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority
- S. Bowie Snyder
- Craig Soldat
- SPCA for Monterey County
- Stanford Redwood City
- City of Sunnyvale
- Victor Medical
- Diana Walsh
- Joanne Watts
- Carol Wilson & Alfie Mulzet
- YIP Latino Family Fund
What to Do If You Find A Bat

During the day, bats often temporarily take shelter, or roost, under canopies, carports, and even high up on the walls of residential and commercial buildings. These bats are just sleeping, digesting their meal, and will be on their merry way the next evening. Bats are only in distress and in need of help if they are found on the ground – they cannot take off by flapping their wings like a bird. If you find a bat that you believe is sick or injured, please do not attempt to handle the bat! Contact your local wildlife rehabilitation center and/or animal control agency for assistance. In the South Bay Area, please call us (408) 929-9453 for further information and advice.

Bats play a critical role in our local system. Bats are critical to the survival of native plants in North America. They consume incredible amounts of bugs each night, reducing damage caused by pests. Bats feed on insects off of flowers and plants, helping pollinate many native plants such as Agave and Saguaro.

Most bats do not carry rabies. While bats are the leading cause of rabies transmission in the U.S., on average, only one to three cases in humans are recorded per year. The percentage of bats testing positive for rabies represents a miniscule portion of the total bat population of North America.

Bats are not blind. Many bats rely on echolocation – using reflected sound to locate objects – to navigate in the darkness, but they also have decent eyesight that they can use to find their prey visually.

Bats do not feed off the blood of humans. While there are three species of vampire bats that feed off of the blood of larger animals in Central and South America, no such species of bats are found in North America, much less California. These bats prefer to feed off of livestock or wild animals, and pose little threat to dogs as they are widely immunized against rabies.

Words About Bats

Find these words about bats in the word search. Words may be found horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

**Facts About Bats**

- Bats play a critical role in our local system. Bats are critical to the survival of native plants in North America. They consume incredible amounts of bugs each night, reducing damage caused by pests. Bats feed on insects off of flowers and plants, helping pollinate many native plants such as Agave and Saguaro.

- Most bats do not carry rabies. While bats are the leading cause of rabies transmission in the U.S., on average, only one to three cases in humans are recorded per year. The percentage of bats testing positive for rabies represents a miniscule portion of the total bat population of North America.

- Bats are not blind. Many bats rely on echolocation – using reflected sound to locate objects – to navigate in the darkness, but they also have decent eyesight that they can use to find their prey visually.

- Bats do not feed off the blood of humans. While there are three species of vampire bats that feed off of the blood of larger animals in Central and South America, no such species of bats are found in North America, much less California. These bats prefer to feed off of livestock or wild animals, and pose little threat to dogs as they are widely immunized against rabies.

**Words About Bats**

Find these words about bats in the word search. Words may be found horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

- beetle
- dusk
- mosquito
- cave
- echolocation
- moth
- colony
- guano
- myotis
- dawn
- migrate
- roost
**Mexican Free-tailed Bat**

Mexican Free-tailed Bats are found throughout the southern half of North America, and their range extends through Central America and down much of South America along the western side of the continent. Many of these bats migrate seasonally, but the population in California does not. They often roost in massive colonies in caves and buildings, with babies kept in the warmest parts of the roost. These bats consume an incredible amount of insects every night, catching the majority of their prey in midair. They fly extremely fast horizontally, achieving speeds of over 100 miles per hour. Their natural predators include raptors such as owls, hawks, and falcons, and sometimes snakes or raccoons are able to catch roosting bats if access permits. The Mexican Free-tailed bat was named the state bat of Texas in 1995.

**Hoary Bat**

Hoary Bats are found throughout North America, and also have substantial populations in the southeastern portions of South America. While they are solitary and live alone, they will migrate in large flocks to warmer locales in the winter. Male hoary bats congregate in the southwestern United States during the summer, while the females remain spread out over the entire range, joining the males during their fall and winter migration. They hunt beetles, moths, and sometimes mosquitoes, over open areas such as large fields or streams and lakes, and are also seen above the treetops in densely-wooded areas. Many hoary bats have been discovered dead beneath wind turbines; scientists currently believe that they are mistaking the wind turbines as tall trees suitable for roosting in.

**California Myotis**

The California Myotis has an extensive range spanning much of western North America. Like the Hoary bat, these bats typically roost alone in the bark of dead trees, but are also found in caves, mines, and even rocky hillsides. The Myotis emerge at dusk and fly slowly, relying on high maneuverability to catch moths and flies. They are quite small, weighing less than one ounce. In colder climates, the California Myotis will hibernate during the winter months. They switch roosts frequently, allowing them to evade predators and find ideal temperatures. California Myotis are extremely well-adapted for water conservation, and do not require much water to survive.
OUR COLD-BLOODED FRIENDS

A frequently-asked question at WCSV is whether we treat native reptiles and amphibians. The answer is yes, and on average we have taken in nearly 35 of them per year for the last nine years. Below are a few of our cold-blooded friends.

**Leapin' Lizards**

Cats frequently catch lizards; as with all wildlife caught by domestic animals, they need to come into our Center to get preventative medication for any possible infections resulting from contact with a cat or dog’s saliva. The most common bacterium encountered is *Pasteurella multocida*, which is found in the mouths of healthy dogs and cats, and can cause swelling and impact respiratory function of those infected by it.

We also see lizards come in with puncture wounds, lacerations, and other injuries inflicted by a cat’s claws such as the eye injury shown here on the sagebrush lizard pictured on the left. Lizards will often detach their tails in an attempt to make their escape when caught by predators. It takes about two to four months on average for the tail to grow back, and the color of the new tail often will not match the lizard’s existing coloration.

The Alligator lizard pictured here on the right was stuck on a glue trap alongside two bats. Ticks were embedded in one side of its neck, and a bite wound from one of the bats was on the other. Unfortunately, the two bats passed away shortly after intake – their injuries being too severe – but this lizard held on, and is slowly recovering. It is receiving antibiotics to treat possible infections sustained from its wounds and will be in care for some time until it displays perfect shedding ability. Then it can be returned to the wild.

**Gopher Snake**

A Milpitas resident discovered this gopher snake entangled in netting, and made the right call by bringing it to WCSV. Our hospital staff discovered constriction lacerations – the poor snake had exacerbated its injuries attempting to escape. Staff very carefully freed the snake, and prepared long term housing for the recovery process. Reptiles must display absolutely perfect shedding ability before being released, requiring prolonged stays where we carefully monitor the healing of its wounds.

Gopher snakes are nonvenomous and do not typically pose a danger to humans, though they will sometimes imitate rattlesnakes by shaking their tails. They are usually found in meadows and fields, but will wander into residential areas in search of food: small mammals, birds, and insects. Other snakes we receive include the California Kingsnake, the Ring-necked Snake, the Gartersnake, the Western Racer, and the venomous Western Rattlesnake.

**Slowly But Surely**

In 2017, an individual discovered this Western pond turtle with a severely cracked shell, and we believe it was struck by a car. Our veterinarian stabilized the shell with metal staples, which it wore for several months before the damaged shell fragments could be safely removed to allow healing to continue. This required an extended stay at the Center. A dedicated volunteer kept the turtle in a climate-controlled environment over the winter to prevent hibernation, which would complicate recovery, and its shell healed successfully. After an entire year, we were able to return the turtle to the wild. Western pond turtles are the one native aquatic turtle commonly found in the Bay Area.
**Bullock's Oriole**

This female Bullock's Oriole came to the Center covered in saliva after being caught by a dog. Aside from being extremely wet, and a small abrasion on the right wrist, the oriole was in good shape. Staff prescribed preventative antibiotics to treat possible infection from germs found in the dog's mouth. This high stress bird was then moved to our Baby Bird Barn to provide her with a quiet environment to recuperate. She will be in care for at least two weeks while recovering from her traumatic ordeal.

Bullock's Orioles have an extensive breeding range spanning most of the western United States, migrating here from Mexico and Central America. They nest in large trees in local woodlands, and will sometimes also build their nests in urban parks. These orioles eat a mix of insects and small fruits, and are often seen extracting juice from larger fruit by making a hole in the side with their bills. If you have hummingbird feeders, you may see Bullock's Orioles stop by for a visit.

**Lazuli Bunting**

This male Lazuli Bunting was picked up by local animal control in Mountain View, and is the only example of this species we have received in our history. The bird was not flying, and upon initial examination, our staff discovered that his left eye was injured. The eyelid was not closing properly, leaving the eye extremely dry. Our veterinarian immediately administered local anesthetic to carefully inspect the eye for damage before applying ointment to reduce swelling and restore the function of the eyelid. Prognosis was extremely guarded due to the nature of the injury, but after three days, the bunting's left eyelid miraculously healed, with the eye presenting as properly-lubricated — an incredible recovery! He was returned to the wild, free to fly once again.

The South Bay Area is part of the Lazuli Bunting’s spring and summer breeding range. They are typically found in less developed areas such as wooded areas and large agricultural fields, but will occasionally venture into the suburbs to take advantage of available millet from bird feeders. Buntings will also consume a variety of insects and berries.

**Striped Skunks**

You may remember these two orphaned striped skunks from the previous issue of *Tracks!* The two babies were discovered alone in San Jose, covered in fleas. While in care, staff administered strong medications to treat possible parasites: roundworm, tapeworm, and hookworm. After several months in care, the two skunks were released together near where they were found to begin their young adult lives.

During the fall, striped skunks will dig dens, or occupy dens abandoned by other animals. They eat large amounts of food in the fall to bulk up for winter, as foraging opportunities may be limited in the colder months. They will often rely on their fat reserves to sustain them during this time, and will lose a significant portion of their body weight by spring. To prevent skunks from taking up residence under your deck or shed, do not leave pet food out and pick up any fallen fruit.
If you see a wild animal in distress, find helpful information at:

wcsv.org
(408) 929-9453
3027 Penitencia Creek Road
San Jose, CA 95132-2815

A leased facility of the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, funded in part by San Jose Animal Care & Services, the city of Milpitas, Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority and the city of Sunnyvale.